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ABSTRACT

Eighteen major research projects on education and schools in the United States are described in this report. Foci of these projects include: (1) curriculum and classroom environments that make for effective learning; (2) the development of approaches for improving educational quality; (3) basic values in American education; and (4) restructuring of schools, especially high schools. Each project description includes the project title, project director, address, funding sources, project time frame, objectives and activities, and director's comments about the project. (MJL)

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AMERICAN SCHOOLS:
TODAY AND TOMORROW

A summary of eighteen key research projects

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INTRODUCTION

This is a challenging time for schools, especially for secondary schools. Today the schools must address some basic questions. Do they need a new "core curriculum"? What is the best way to balance the demand for excellence with the need for equity? What is the best way for local schools to be structured and financed in order to provide needed direct services to students?

In addressing questions such as these, the research projects described in this booklet fall into three main categories: studies that explore major restructuring of the high school; studies that seek to determine the basic values in American education; and studies that examine the curriculum, and the climate and condition of classrooms, to determine what makes for effective learning.

As a public service, Education Development Center has prepared this booklet. The eighteen major projects presented focus on the immediate challenges and possible future directions of schools in the United States. Each brief description has been reviewed by the project director. In many cases the directors have contributed a comment to be included in this booklet or added further questions raised by the study in progress. They are aware that you may want to be in touch with them to find out, in more detail, the nature of the project underway and the outcomes when they emerge.

Education Development Center (EDC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to human development through education. We have 22 years of experience in the research, development, evaluation and distribution of materials and programs, and in the provision of training and technical assistance for learners in every kind of setting. Over the years we have helped to meet the educational needs of the nation through our work with states and local communities. We hope that this overview of projects having as their common goal the improvement of schooling in America will be useful to you as you work to address the needs of students in your state.

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PROJECT TITLE: A Study of High Schools
Co-sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Commission on Educational Issues of the National Association of Independent Schools

PROJECT DIRECTORS: Theodore R. Sizer, Chairman

Arthur G. Powell, Executive Director
123 Mt. Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 491-5450

FUNDING SOURCES: Carnegie Corporation of New York
Charles E. Culpeper Foundation
Commonwealth Fund
Edward John Noble Foundation
Gates Foundation
The Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc.

TIME FRAME: 1980-1984

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This is a national inquiry into the condition of American secondary education. It aims to synthesize what is known about adolescent learning and good high schools, to examine the nature of change in high schools especially since World War II, to provide a richer sense of the complexities of life in American high school education and to suggest ways and means of reform.

The study will devote major attention to the constructive confrontation among teacher, student and subject as it occurs in classrooms and other learning settings. Second, it will focus on the importance of school climate. Third, it will explore the possibilities of common educational purposes in a pluralist society, in particular those that emphasize the development of complex mental abilities and attitudes which free students to educate themselves throughout adult life.

During 1981-82 the project will prepare several historical essays on aspects of change in American high schools since World War II. It will also review the contributions of recent and retrospective major research studies on youth and engage in intensive field studies of a representative range of American high schools. During 1982-83 the project will disseminate findings through publications, workshops, and conferences.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "A Study of High Schools is one of the largest collaborative efforts between the public and nonpublic sectors of American secondary education. Among the issues we consider is the question of what constructive experience of each sector is germane to and transferable to the other."

PROJECT TITLE: A Study of Schooling in the United States

PROJECT DIRECTOR: John I. Goodlad, Dean

ADDRESS:
Graduate School of Education
University of California at Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(213) 825-2622

FUNDING SOURCE:
Consortium of Foundations (Danforth, Ford, International Paper, Jennings, Kettering, Mott, Pedamorphosis, Inc., Rockefeller, JDR III Fund, Spencer)
National Institute of Education
U.S. Office of Education

TIME FRAME: 1973-1983

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the study is to formulate hypotheses about schooling, to encourage the study of what happens in schools, and to stimulate discussions about the purposes of schooling and ways in which schools may be improved.

An in-depth investigation of 38 schools, including elementary, junior high and senior high schools, used questionnaires and interviews with students, teachers, principals, parents, school board members, and central office administrators. Statistical analysis of the data gathered from the 38 schools has been completed. More than 20 technical and methodological papers are presently available at cost from the above address.

A summary volume by Dr. Goodlad will be published in 1982. Three other books will appear, one concentrating on each level of schooling. A series of other subject-oriented books on English, The Language Arts and The Arts will follow. In addition, a book on Tracking is in progress.

PROJECT TITLE: An Education of Value

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Stephen K. Bailey, President

ADDRESS: National Academy of Education
c/o Harvard University Graduate School of Education
Gutman Library
Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 495-4796

FUNDING SOURCE: Lilly Foundation
National Endowment for the Humanities

TIME FRAME: 1980-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project will analyze the historical and contemporary values that underlie the organization and curricula of education. The objectives of education appear to be unclear today because of a confusion of values that divide rather than unite people in a pluralistic society. The goal will be to determine some shared values that may be considered essential for all students.

The study will review conditions of effective learning and teaching and will make recommendations for school reform in an attempt to provide all students with what is perceived to be an "essential curriculum."

A book entitled An Education of Value is being prepared, and is expected to go to press in January 1982.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "Our concern is related to three underlying beliefs: that publics will not long support what they do not revere; that students will not continue to profit from regimens they neither understand nor respect; and that talented educators will not stay long in a profession whose rewards are diminished and whose fundamental social purposes are in doubt. In the light of these beliefs, and in the light of the mission of our sponsor, the National Academy of Education, to 'promote scholarly inquiry and discussion concerning the ends and means of education in all its forms...,' we have attempted to set forth the characteristics of an education of value in American secondary schools for the inevitably troubled and dangerous years ahead for the nation and the world."

PROJECT TITLE: BEST BET (Building Effective Strategies for Teaching Basics Through Educational Technology)

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Mary Frost-Distler

ADDRESS: WNET Channel 13
336 West 58th Street
New York, NY 10019
(212) 664-7120

FUNDING SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education
Office of Libraries and Technology

TIME FRAME: 1980-1981

PROJECT DESCRIPTOIN: The purpose of the project is to develop and prepare a Teacher Action Guide and accompanying training materials to prepare teachers in the understanding, selection, planning, and utilization of educational technology for the improvement of basic skills instruction.

Research techniques include literature searches of ERIC and other data bases, as well as consultation with a national advisory board composed of experts in basic skills, teacher training, educational technology, curriculum, educational television, and the use of computers. Various state curricula were examined and compared, and interviews were conducted with teachers, learning resource specialists, administrators, and children.

Three products are being prepared for national dissemination through state departments of education: a teacher training manual, a teacher guide to the use and evaluation of hardware and computers, and a thirty-minute videotape showing creative means of integrating technology into standard classroom curricula. State education agencies will adapt and disseminate the materials to meet and incorporate state and local curricula requirements.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "BEST BET builds a bridge between the curricula that exist in basic skills and the educational technology that is available to the classroom teacher. BEST BET provides a basis for decision making and using educational technology on a daily basis."

FURTHER QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE STUDY: Dissemination of the materials may be a problem since BEST BET calls for only two copies to be distributed to each state education agency.

PROJECT TITLE: Excellence in Education: A Study of the American High School

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Paul L. Houts

ADDRESS: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
11 Dupont Circle, Suite 145
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 797-3650

FUNDING SOURCE: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
Carnegie Corporation
ARCO Foundation

TIME FRAME: January 1981 - February 1983

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The study aims to improve the quality of secondary schools, to strengthen the connections among high schools, colleges, and the workplace, and to help rebuild confidence in public education.

It will focus on what goes on inside the classroom: how students are being taught (instruction); what they are being taught (curriculum); and how they are being assessed (testing and evaluation).

A literature review will synthesize major current studies. Through site visits, researchers will examine such educational components as school climate, leadership, instruction, and curriculum. An analysis of curricula is presently being conducted, and the questions of articulation and sequential learning are being explored.

In 1983, a summary report on the status of the American high school with recommendations will be directed to the general public and to the educational community. Action grants will subsequently be awarded to selected high schools as a means of testing recommendations made by the study.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "We are hoping that the study will give the public a better understanding of the issues and problems confronting secondary education as well as a better view of its existing strengths."

PROJECT TITLE: Minority Students in Catholic Secondary Schools

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Rev. Andrew M. Greeley

ADDRESS:
National Opinion Research Center
6030 S. Ellis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637
(312) 753-1501

FUNDING SOURCE:
Ford Foundation
Spencer Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1980-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This study seeks to define conditions of learning most often successful for minority students in secondary schools. The study investigates ways in which discipline, order, courses taken, and amount of time devoted to homework relate to the achievement scores of minority students.

Data from the study High School and Beyond provided the statistical basis for this work.

Initial findings conclude that black and other minority students attending Catholic secondary schools display higher levels of academic achievement than do minority students who attend public schools.

A book entitled Minority Students in Catholic Secondary Schools is being prepared for printing. It will be available in the spring of 1982 from:

Transaction Books, Inc.
Rutgers State University, Bldg. 4051
New Brunswick, NJ 08903
(201) 932-2280

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PROJECT TITLE: Project EQuality

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Adrienne Bailey
Vice President for Academic Affairs

ADDRESS: The College Board
838 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10106

FUNDING SOURCE: College Board
Ford Foundation
Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1980-1990

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Project EQuality is an action-oriented project with the primary objective of marshalling colleges and universities to work together on improving the quality of secondary education, with particular focus on the preparation of students for college and on issues of equality of opportunity.

Objectives include: enhancing public understanding of quality education; promoting basic academic competency development; defining and promoting a revised high school curriculum that emphasizes agreed-upon outcomes; formulating guidelines with respect to texts and other learning materials; undertaking research, study, and demonstration on the factors affecting quality in college preparation; creating new approaches to the measurement of learning with emphasis on diagnosis and placement; fostering a hospitable environment for schools and colleges to engage jointly in efforts toward the improvement of quality; developing materials, programs and services that aid in efforts to improve instruction; conducting activities that overcome the unique learning and motivational problems of youngsters who suffer from poverty and racial or cultural isolation; and participating in efforts to formulate supportive public policy.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "Project EQuality is the latest and most broadly gauged project in three decades of many special College Board efforts to improve quality and equality in education. The success of the Advanced Placement Program, the Commissions on Mathematics and English, the Advisory Panel on Score Decline, and many others testify to the Board's unique capability to effect significant constructive change in education."

FURTHER QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE STUDY: The extent and range of national efforts currently aimed at schools will soon raise hard questions about such matters as consistency, competition, communication, cooperation and evaluation. The involved agencies may need to get together soon on some of these issues.

PROJECT TITLE: Project on Alternatives in Education

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Mary Anne Raywid, Professor of Education
Hofstra University
Hempstead, N.Y. 11550
(516) 271-0661 (home office) or (516) 560-3526 (Hofstra)

FUNDING SOURCE:
1981-1982 National Institute of Education
National Foundation for the Improvement of Education
Johnson Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1980-1985

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This is an action-oriented national study of alternative secondary schools. It involves a planning year and a four-year research investigation of individual schools and programs, with deliberate attempts to translate research recommendations into policy-making reform. University-based researchers and teacher practitioners, working together, will conduct field studies and collect quantitative data.

The study makes a deliberate attempt to involve practitioners, and researchers at different institutions, on a collaborative basis.

The study will include a national survey of alternative schools; a more intensive survey of selected programs and their cognitive and affective outcomes; site studies of the daily life of selected programs; a follow-up survey of graduates; investigation of the organizational, governance, and financial dimensions of individual alternatives and of options systems; and policy study of related issues.

Dissemination is to occur throughout the duration of the study, as a part of involvement and service activities for participant schools, and with the help of PAE's participant sponsor organizations (AACTE, ASCD, ECS, NASSP, and NEA). In the final year, the project will prepare audience-specific materials for a broad spectrum of constituencies, including alternative-school practitioners and administrators, school-board members and policy makers at every level.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "PAE is a carefully dovetailed response to the several sets of problems currently plaguing education. In the tradition of the Eight-Year Study, it combines research and reform strategy, basing its plan on the requisites of school change as well as on the demands of credible and persuasive research."

PROJECT TITLE: Project Paideia

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Mortimer Adler, Director

ADDRESS: Institute for Philosophical Research
101 East Ontario Street
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 337-4102

FUNDING SOURCE: MacArthur Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1980-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the project (represented by the Greek word for general humanistic learning) is to study the present state of U.S. educational institutions and to make recommendations for curriculum revision in order to improve the learning of individuals.

A series of task force meetings of educational and business leaders has been held at the Aspen Institute and the Institute for Philosophical Research to develop consensus on a twelve-year curriculum of basic schooling that would begin at age four and emphasize the liberal arts. It would be divided into three parts: subjects (such as mathematics, science, and social, political, and economic history); fundamental skills (such as those needed for literacy and numeracy); analysis and reasoning in English and in a foreign language; and the arts (such as music, literature, and the visual arts).

The task force recommendations include a major revision of existing teacher training programs.

The final conference was held in August, 1981. Findings of the task force and recommendations for change will be published in the spring of 1982 and will be widely disseminated in the education and business communities.

PROJECT TITLE: Redefining General Education in the American High School

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Gordon Cawelti
Executive Director

ADDRESS: Association for Supervision
and Curriculum Development
225 N. Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 549-9110

FUNDING SOURCE: The Ford Foundation and
The Johnson Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1981-1983

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Seventeen secondary schools have been chosen to undertake a comprehensive local study of their own general education programs. Based on these studies and on the local district analysis of current requirements, each local district faculty will be encouraged to plan for revision of its school curriculum starting in 1982-1983. Each school district is being asked to redefine a program of general education designed to prepare students for life in the 21st century.

It is hoped that model practices of curriculum reform will emerge.

Representatives from the seventeen schools met in Wisconsin in July 1981 to meet one another and to receive guidelines for redefining general education. They will convene twice more to review progress and share recommendations.

Following the meeting in the summer of 1982, recommendations of the network schools will be made public. It is hoped that the resulting recommendations will further stimulate local examination of secondary curricula and thereby produce schools better able to serve the needs of adolescents. No attempt will be made to impose a single curriculum design on all schools, since there is consensus that curriculum change is most effective on a local basis.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "Network representatives will meet again in February. The initial conference in Wisconsin discussed alternative conceptions of how knowledge is organized and change strategy considered, and why general education is important."

PROJECT TITLE: Secondary School Improvement Project (Challenge Education)

PROJECT DIRECTORS:

Gilbert Johnson
Charles F. Kettering Foundation
5335 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, OH 45429
(513) 434-7300

Gary Phillips
I/D/E/A
Secondary School Improvement Project
8401 Westfield Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 43240
(317) 251-4047

FUNDING SOURCE: Charles F. Kettering Foundation
Lilly Endowment

TIME FRAME: 1980-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The mission of this project is to ensure that changes in secondary education are planned, purposeful, positive and directed toward locally developed, agreed-upon ends. It grows out of two earlier projects: The Individually Guided Education project funded by Kettering and the Walkabout Model for Secondary Education funded by the Lilly Endowment. These projects shared common elements: 1) the belief that education needs to be personalized and de-institutionalized and 2) the belief that professional and institutional excellence in secondary education is possible. Nine principles of excellence in education were developed as goals that most people would value for schools and as criteria against which a school may be analyzed.

The current project focuses on developing a detailed and replicable process by which a school can engage a team of parents, students, administrators and teachers in structured planning to improve its own educational offerings. This process has been pilot-tested for the past year in three junior and three senior high schools in Dayton and Indianapolis. Pilot-testing will be continued in eight additional schools in 1981-82 under the leadership of three trained facilitators in Westchester County, New York (BOCES), in Anacostia County, Virginia, and in the Detroit Public Schools.

PROJECT TITLE: The Articulation Commission: A Joint Project of the State Board of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents

PROJECT DIRECTORS:

Elaine Hairston
Director for Special Programs
Ohio Board of Regents
3600 State Office Tower
30 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-6000

Irene Bandy
Executive Director for Administration
Ohio Department of Education
65 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-3708

FUNDING SOURCE: No funding; one staff person each from the Ohio Board of Regents and the Department of Education supplied support.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Commission explored three basic areas--curriculum, teachers, and communications-- and made recommendations for change in order to ensure student success in college.

Curriculum recommendations: that college-bound students take four units of English with emphasis on composition; a minimum of three units of mathematics, one in the senior year; and three units each of social studies, science and a foreign language. Further, the Commission recommended that unconditional acceptance at Ohio four-year post-secondary institutions depend upon completion of that college preparatory curriculum.

In the area of teacher preparation, the Commission recommended greater emphasis on major subject matter content areas at all stages of teacher training, inservice, and recertification.

Finally, it stressed the importance of communicating to educators, parents, and students the consequences of not completing the college preparatory curriculum. An Advisory Council for College Preparatory Education has been appointed to monitor implementation of Commission recommendations and to evaluate the outcome by 1983-84.

Copies of the Commission's recommendations are available from the Ohio Board of Regents Office at $3.00 a copy.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "The heart of the Commission's report is the consensus on specific basic skill acquisition that should be expected of college-bound high school graduates. This consensus was reached by gathering together faculty members from the English and mathematics departments from all varieties of two- and four-year public and private postsecondary institutions for two days of brainstorming.

"The value of the report in the long term is really imposing a kind of 'truth-in-advertising' at the postsecondary level. To tell students that they can get by with minimum preparation leads them astray; this report sets the record straight."

PROJECT TITLE: The High School and Beyond: National Longitudinal Study for the 1980's

PROJECT DIRECTOR: James S. Coleman

ADDRESS: National Opinion Research Center
University of Chicago
Evanston, IL 60637
(312) 753-1300

FUNDING SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education
National Center for Educational Statistics

TIME FRAME: 1980-1990

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the project is to provide a second national longitudinal survey of youth (the first was conducted for NCES in 1972) covering the transitional years from the beginning of high school through postsecondary educational and/or work experiences.

The project focuses on experiences within secondary education, experiences relevant to government policy in higher education and work experiences relevant to youth employment policy.

Questionnaires and cognitive tests were administered to 58,000 students who were high school sophomores and seniors in 1980. Questionnaires were also given to 6000 of their parents. The findings were analyzed, and base-year data analysis continues at present. Preparations are underway for the first of five biennial follow-up contacts to original cohorts in Spring, 1982.

Public availability of these data will yield multiple analyses by educators and sociologists well into the future.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "The aim of High School and Beyond is to provide data that is relevant to policies involving youth. This data will not be used solely by academic researchers or government policymakers but will be available for pluralistic use by all parties affected by policies in these areas."

PROJECT TITLE: The National Commission on Excellence in Education

PROJECT DIRECTORS: David P. Gardner, Chairman

Milton Goldberg, Executive Director
The National Commission on Excellence in Education
c/o National Institute of Education
Washington, D.C. 20208
(202) 254-5740

FUNDING SOURCE: Department of Education, Office of the Secretary
National Institute of Education

TIME FRAME: September 1981 - March 1983

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: A nineteen-member Commission has been established by Secretary of Education T. H. Bell and given a charter to make practical recommendations for action to halt and reverse declining educational standards in such areas as high school graduation requirements, college admissions standards, and teacher preparation and certification. The Commission will review data and hold hearings on the quality of teaching and learning in schools, colleges and universities, both public and private, with special concern for the educational experience of teenage youth. It will study the education systems in a number of advanced countries and compare the results achieved there with those achieved in the United States. Finally, the Commission will examine schools that consistently produce students with high achievement levels in an effort to identify exemplary approaches to school improvement.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "This national body will be the centerpiece of a campaign to promote excellence in our educational institutions. Through our efforts we seek a renewal of the educational establishment of the country. We solicit the support of all who care about our future. The education of the American people is a solemn responsibility. It is a most important duty of state and local governments. How well we do this will help determine our national future, because education is truly the key to that future."

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PROJECT TITLE: The Need for Quality: Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools, Southern Regional Education Board

PROJECT DIRECTOR:
Eva Galumbos
Research Associate
Southern Regional Education Board
1340 Spring Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 875-9211

FUNDING SOURCE: No extra funding

TIME FRAME: February 1981 - July 1983

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Southern Regional Education Board is the coordinating agency for fourteen southern states. In 1980, the Southern Governors' Conference commented on adverse effects resulting from the separateness of higher education boards from state departments of education. Governor Graham of Florida appointed the Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools to make recommendations for areas in which the two groups could usefully collaborate.

The Task Force broadly represented all constituencies involved: laypersons, superintendents of education, members of state boards of education, deans of colleges of education, and master teachers. The Commission met three times and set forth in its June 1981 report entitled "The Need for Quality," twenty-five recommendations to improve the quality of teaching and learning. These recommendations concern college admission standards and high school curriculum standards and graduation requirements, as well as teacher preparation and certification standards.

In the next two years the Task Force will attempt to document areas of duplicated effort, monitor efforts at collaboration between high schools and institutions for postsecondary education, and promote implementation of the twenty-five recommendations for quality.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "The positive reaction to the 25 recommendations indicates that we have hit fertile ground. The educational community is in a state of ferment to react to the public demand for tighter academic standards in the schools and colleges. It is a matter now of breaking through institutional rigidities, vested interests, and inertia.

"Every individual in education at each level has the opportunity of forging ahead in some small way to raise the level of academic expectations. Such individual action does not have to await committee meetings, consensus, or lengthy research. Our project will encourage such diffused activities as well as institutional reform. The South led the movement for minimum competency testing of teachers. The Need For Quality is another indication that the region is determined to stress academic improvement."

PROJECT TITLE: The Scarsdale Group: Planning for the Eighties

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Thomas Sobol, Superintendent

ADDRESS: Scarsdale Public Schools
Brewster Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
(914) 723-5500

FUNDING SOURCE: Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation

TIME FRAME: 1980-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the project is to develop a planning agenda for college preparatory secondary schools.

Thirty college preparatory school district superintendents and curriculum directors met by invitation in Scarsdale in October 1980. Discussions were organized around the topics of students, teachers, curriculum and the school as an institution. Participants identified subjects for future meetings, including what knowledge and skills students should be acquiring, college counseling and college admission strategies, the meaning of the technology explosion for education, and integration of the arts into the college preparatory program.

Funding is being sought in order to hold additional conferences.

A report of the 1980 conference is now available for $1.00 from the above address; reports on future conferences will also be made available at cost. Attempts to define a "core" curriculum will be made.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "Our inquiry thus far has these few premises: 1) Many recent studies engage the form but not the substance of secondary schooling. 2) These studies notwithstanding, secondary schools are likely to continue to exist in something like their present form for at least the next several years. 3) Meanwhile, beset by other urgencies, these schools have not addressed the essence: what should we teach? What common core of knowledge, if any, should high school students seek to learn? 4) Thoughtful practitioners can make a useful contribution to the inquiry."

PROJECT TITLE: The Urban Education Studies

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Francis Chase

ADDRESS: 3505 Turtle Creek Boulevard
Dallas, TX 75219
(214) 528-8409

FUNDING SOURCE: Spencer Foundation
National Institute of Education

TIME FRAME: Spring 1977 - October 1980

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the study was to discover and make known workable programs in the areas of career education, basic skills instruction, and school-community collaboration.

The project studied sixteen urban school districts in order to identify promising practices and instances of school renewal and reform. Teams of trained interviewers and evaluators visited each district, and sought evidence of school renewal such as techniques of evaluation, planning, management and staff development.

A book reporting on the findings of the project is available from:

The Council of Great City Schools
1707 H Street, NW
Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 298-8707

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "The Urban Education Studies revealed many promising developments and underscored the urgency of further steps to revitalize public education, through 1) an imaginative and thorough reorganization of our public school systems; and 2) more effective collaboration with other community agencies."

FURTHER QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE STUDY: New approaches are required to facilitate a continuous flow of educationally applicable research into educational practice through the removal of barriers in institutional structures, personnel policies, and reward systems.

PROJECT TITLE: Wisconsin Program for the Renewal and Improvement of Secondary Education

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Herbert J. Klausmeier, Director

ADDRESS: Wisconsin Research and Development Center
for Individualized Schooling
University of Wisconsin School of Education
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 262-0840

FUNDING SOURCE: National Institute of Education
U.S. Department of Education

TIME FRAME: 1976-1982

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This project is aimed at helping secondary schools determine areas of needed improvement and move toward making these improvements.

A longitudinal research study and the development of a program that prepares secondary school leaders to start systematic improvement activities are being carried on concurrently.

In 1977-78, baseline data on 4200 students from five high schools were collected on such factors as achievement, attitudes, and attendance patterns. The final annual data were collected in May 1981. Analysis of four-year longitudinal data is presently in progress.

The program for educating local school leaders includes materials, workshops, and university courses. Data for the summative evaluation of the program were gathered in local school staff development programs and in university courses in 1980-81.

Final reports of both the longitudinal study and the summative evaluation will be prepared in 1982. Wisconsin is serving as a model for statewide dissemination and knowledge utilization. National dissemination and knowledge utilization activities are expected to start in 1982-83.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: "All of the data have been analyzed, but the final report has not been written. The results are most encouraging. Local schools are finding many ways of improving the quality of education. Both university students and teachers in the field rate the materials as of high technical quality that facilitate learning."

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CREDITS: Catherine Fallon, Researcher

Cynthia Lang, Executive Editor